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Governor



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Lt. Governor

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Baker-Polito Administration Proclaim White Ribbon Day to Prevent Gender-Based Violence

10th annual campaign encourages men and boys to participate

BOSTON – Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito today joined members of the administration, public officials and advocates from across the Commonwealth at Fanueil Hall in Boston to commemorate the 10th annual White Ribbon Day in Massachusetts, issuing an official proclamation and enlisting men and boys to commit to being part of the solution to end violence against women and all gender-based violence.

"Massachusetts must continue our steadfast approach to prevent sexual and domestic violence, and men and boys have a key role to play in raising awareness and ending gender-based violence," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "Respect, compassion, and non-violence should be the focal point of all relationships, and I welcome all men and boys to join us in finding solutions to end violence and abuse."

Jane Doe Inc., the leading statewide sexual and domestic violence advocacy organization, launched the state White Ribbon Day prevention campaign in 2007. Since 2015, Governor Baker has served as honorary chairperson of the White Ribbon Day campaign. There are now more than 774 men who have signed on as White Ribbon Day Ambassadors, as well as 115 city, town and organization affiliates.

"I am encouraged by the incredible response to the White Ribbon Day campaign in

the Commonwealth and I am especially proud of the role our administration has played in its growth these last two years," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, Chair of the Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence.** "Families, children, and individuals across the Commonwealth deserve a life free of sexual and domestic violence, and it is exciting to see so many of our towns and cities become White Ribbon Day affiliates."

The Governor and Lt. Governor were joined by House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo, Senate President Stan Rosenberg, Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, University of Massachusetts Boston Chancellor Keith Motley, and Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera, along with leaders from Jane Doe Inc. and other domestic violence advocates. Sheriff Koutoujian and Chancellor Motley serve as co-chairs for White Ribbon Day. Jane Doe Inc. also debuted a new "Reimagine Manhood" public service announcement featuring Tom Leydon from Fox25, Joe Amrosino from TV7, Steve Burton from WBZTV-4, and Mike Lynch from Channel 5 that will air on all four stations during the first commercial break of the 5:00 PM newscast.

Following the speaking program, participants marched to Boston City Hall for the first-ever raising of a White Ribbon Day Flag. With support from Presenting Sponsor Banker of America and in partnership with the Office of Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, the Massachusetts Municipal Association, and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, Jane Doe Inc. has sent more than 50 White Ribbon Day flags to middle schools, high schools, college campuses and municipalities throughout the Commonwealth.

"I am proud that the House's 2014 domestic violence law is one of the strongest and most comprehensive in at least a generation. Because of the courageous survivors we heard from while crafting that law – many of whom lend their voices to White Ribbon Day – we know that these provisions have and will continue to save lives. With the uncertainty in Washington threatening the security and livelihoods of women we, as public officials must do everything in our power to stem the tragic tide of violence against women," **said House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo (D-Winthrop).**

"We can have a society free of domestic violence if we keep working for it. I am very encouraged when I see how far White Ribbon Day has come in its first 10 years," **said Senate President Stan Rosenberg (D-Amherst).** "We won't stop until we end domestic violence once and for all."

"I am proud to stand with Governor Baker, Chancellor Motley and so many others to highlight the important role men play as fathers, sons, brothers, friends and mentors in ending violence against women," **said White Ribbon Day Co-Chair Sheriff Koutoujian.** "By standing up and taking the pledge today, we are saying to the world

that a man's strength is shown through his character and moral judgment - never through the use of force and violence."

"Kofi Annan once argued that violence against women is the worst and most common human rights violation," **said White Ribbon Day Co-Chair UMass Boston Chancellor J. Keith Motley.** "That sentiment captures the urgency of this plague. And it is with that urgency that I, and no doubt every male member of the UMass Boston community, proudly stand with Governor Baker, Lt. Governor Polito and others on this White Ribbon Day."

"The White Ribbon Day Campaign advocates a clear message, violence against women, or violence in any domestic partnership is not acceptable, and should not be tolerated," **said Lawrence Mayor Daniel Rivera.** "I was proud to stand with the White Ribbon Campaign, Governor Baker, Sheriff Peter Koutoujian and many other Elected Officials and men from throughout the Commonwealth as we take a pledge to end domestic violence."

"The relevance of the White Ribbon Day Campaign remains as poignant today as when we started a decade ago. While we have made progress in addressing issues of sexual and domestic violence and gender equity and promoting healthy and safe relationships, we cannot take these gains for granted," **said Debra J. Robbin, Executive Director of Jane Doe Inc.** "The 780 individual male Ambassadors and 125 Affiliates - groups, companies, schools, municipalities and government agencies – who form the backbone of the White Ribbon Day Campaign are critical allies in our quest for safety and justice for all survivors and communities."

In April 2015, Governor Baker signed Executive Order 563, [re-launching](#) the Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence. Over its first year, the Council's priorities included analyzing and reporting on the implementation of *Chapter 260: An Act Relative to Domestic Violence*, a report was issued providing updates on each of the 49 actionable provisions within the law. The Council has launched work groups in five priority areas, including child trafficking and prevention education in schools and universities, that have established year one deliverables and will report this summer.

Since taking office, the Baker-Polito Administration has nearly doubled funding at the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) for domestic violence specialists, which will allow DTA to double the number of specialists from 11 to 22. The administration has also added funding for four domestic violence specialists at the Department of Children and Families, bringing the total at DCF to nine. The administration's Fiscal Year 2018 budget proposal recommends \$31.3 million at the Department of Public Health for domestic violence and survivor services, as well as \$990,000 for the

domestic violence court advocacy program.

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